

# Note of the meeting of the Environmental Sustainability Partnership

## (ESP) Board

Held on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Brunswick Room, Guildhall, Bath.

### Attendees

<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Position</b>
Chair - Cllr Bob Goodman	Cabinet Member for Development & Neighbourhoods, Combe Down Ward Councillor, B&NES Council
Cllr Patrick Anketell-Jones	Lansdown Ward Councillor, Conservative Group, B&NES Council
Cllr John Bull	Paulton Ward Councillor, Labour Group, B&NES Council
Cllr Richard Samuel*	Walcot Ward Councillor, Liberal Democrat Group (standing in for Cllr Crossley)
Peter Andrews	Community Board Member, Transition Bath and other community initiatives.
Bruce Laurence	Director of Public Health, B&NES Council
David Trethewey	Director, Partnerships & Corporate Services, B&NES Council

<b>Board Advisors</b>	<b>Position</b>
Barry Smith	Sustainable Places Team Leader, Environment Agency
Peter Capener	Independent Sustainable Energy Consultant

<b>Guests</b>	<b>Position</b>
Sarah Jackson	B&NES Council
Sara Grimes	Sustainability Officer, B&NES Council

<b>Standing Officers</b>	<b>Position</b>
Jane Wildblood	Corporate & Community Sustainability Manager, B&NES Council
Micaela Basford	Sustainability Officer, B&NES Council

<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Position</b>
Mandy Bishop	Director, Environmental Services, B&NES Council
Cllr Paul Crossley*	Southdown Ward Councillor, Liberal Democrat Group, Member Advocate for The Sustainable Environment, B&NES Council.
Shaun Carr	Executive Director of Property Service, Curo Housing Association
Chair Cllr Mark Shelford	Conservative Deputy Group Leader, Cabinet Member for Transport & Environment, Lyncombe Ward Councillor, Conservative, B&NES Council.
Cllr June Player	Westmoreland Ward Councillor, Independent, B&NES Council

## **1. Welcome, Introductions and Declarations of Interest**

- Introductions were made.
- No declarations of interest were made.

## **2. Minutes & Actions from the last Board Meeting**

It was agreed the minutes were accurate and a true reflection of the meeting.

## **3. Delivering the 25 Year Environment Plan – the local angle**

Barry Smith presented to the Board. The 25 Year Environment Plan is one of a suite of government documents released in the last 12 months that are complimentary to each other, including the Air Quality Strategy, the Industrial Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. The presentation gave an overview of the UK's 25 Year Environmental Plan, with attention drawn to the chapters which affect the Bath and North East Somerset area.

### **Items covered included:**

- Strong narrative that the plan is for everyone, whether an NGO, a business, or local authority, we all have responsibility to deliver on the areas where we have influence.
- DEFRA has a consultation that is open at the moment about Net-gain – putting a value on biodiversity as a unit.
- Government are developing metrics to assess progress against the 25 Year Plan.
- The Year of Green Action is in 2019 to encourage community engagement and build momentum. A toolkit will be available for those wanting to support it.

### **During the discussion, the following was noted:**

- Opportunities for B&NES on using and managing land sustainably in its land holdings and highways, regarding run-off and downstream impacts; the benefits of woodlands for cooling and carbon capture; and, how the Green Infrastructure Plan is reflected in local plans and decision making.
- Opportunities for Health & Wellbeing, especially about making use of the local landscape, e.g. woodland, waterways. Managing traffic and air quality around schools.
- Developers will have to factor in the net-gain costs to their business case when purchasing land.
- Nationally, from a carbon emission perspective, the challenge is around transport where carbon emissions have not reduced, whereas emissions from domestic and industrial sources have been reducing.
- There is likely to be a move from diesel to petrol car ownership in the next few years.

The Chair supported the 25 Year Environmental Plan and noted that it is important for the Council to identify the local priorities and make them known, so that local partners can take a lead on relevant issues.

Sarah Jackson presented an overview of the environmental partnerships in the area and how the Council's involvement contributes to delivering Council priorities. These in turn, contribute to the delivery of the 25 Year Environment Plan.

**Items covered included:**

- The environment needs to be considered holistically to deliver the Council's people-focused priorities. Unless we get the environment right, the impacts will be felt by citizens and the number of vulnerable people would increase.
- Most partnerships have between 10-15 partners. There is Council officer representation in these partnerships. These partnerships provide opportunity to engage on green infrastructure at different levels, through the various strategy and plan documents and associated processes.
- The West of England Green Infrastructure Strategy is pulling together different strands. There is an evidence base being gathered.
- Net-gain is in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Joint Spatial Plan so it will run through B&NES plans. In some cases the impacts on habitats due to planned growth of housing might have to be delivered elsewhere, such as being able to deliver green infrastructure projects in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.
- Ecological network mapping. Reverse mapping shows where people don't have access to nature. Development management team then know what is expected from development areas.

**Challenges:**

- Taking a holistic view when using external funding awarded against specific criteria.
- Some designations get access to external funding, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks, which are in the rural areas of the district, whereas the urban areas of the B&NES landscape is under a lot of pressure, such as Bath and World Heritage Site designation, but there is no funding.
- Local wildlife designations don't come up in property searches when buying land, such as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest, which can cause unforeseen issues for the purchaser.

**Action** – Sarah Jackson will create a visualisation showing the connections between the partnerships and names of key officers.

**Action** – the Council will assemble a programme of events and activities under the Year of Green Action banner, such as the Festival of Nature, Plastics Pledge and key community-organised events including the friends of parks' groups.

**During the discussion, the following was noted:**

- The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) work on the Joint Local Transport Plan and then flowing into the Joint Spatial Plan is strengthening the green infrastructure agenda in special and transport planning.
- Maps of where people are most at risk of overheating and layering that with green spaces.
- Mapping in Strategic Development locations.

**B&NES Plastic Pledge proposal**

Jane Wildblood presented. Following the Council's clear commitment at Council in February 2018 about tackling plastic pollution locally, the Council is proposing to launch a B&NES Plastic Pledge in the first quarter of 2019.

This is a first step. This is initially aimed at business and is about working together to understand this complex issue and make well informed decisions when phasing out single use items. It will build on existing energy, creativity and engagement, the intention is to amplify this and engage more businesses.

**During the discussion, the following was noted:**

- Lots of catering venues locally have moved away from plastic straws and brought in alternatives to plastic for single use items.
- There are already organisations and groups who will be keen to sign up.
- The Council's Waste and Recycling Team are lobbying government to provide leadership. The UK Plastics Pact has signatories from many major retailers.
- Can the Council lean on the LGA to talk to government?
- Once people are engaged, we should aim to encourage them to go further.

#### **4. Local Plan**

Sara Grimes provided a verbal update on the Local Plan. There is a consultation open until 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

Included in the plan are some key policies relating to environmental sustainability:

- True-zero carbon development, which is subject to the Council's own viability study, and are set out following a hierarchy of energy efficiency, onsite renewables and carbon off-setting off site.
- Transport including the provision for electric vehicles in new developments, and,
- A Wind Energy Policy.

The Sustainable Construction Checklist is now in place for all developments over the scale of one.

**During the discussion, the following was noted:**

- Residential parking standards present different challenges in urban or rural areas.
- Ambitious transport targets mean that you have to look at providing alternatives, i.e. public transport.
- There is a generational shift happening on car ownership

- The Smart Grid is emerging and battery storage is a key component of this, whether domestic, parked cars or second-life batteries.

### Table of actions

Action	Owner	By when
1. Create visualisation showing the natural environment partnerships, their connections and names of key officers	Sarah Jackson	February Board meeting
2. Assemble a programme of events and activities under the Year of Green Action banner, such as the Festival of nature, the Plastics Pledge and key community-organised events, eg by friends of parks' groups.	Micaela Basford and Sarah Jackson	February Board meeting

**Date of the next ESP Board meeting:  
26<sup>th</sup> February 2019  
Kaposvar Room, 2.30pm.**

*Theme: Sustainable Construction Checklist Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) & West of England Energy Strategy*